

TOPIC 13: EXTREMISM IN THE EU

PSC 136 – Terrorism in World Politics

EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM IN EUROPE

- European Terrorist attack fatalities 2009-2022 (CSIS)
 - Jihadist 69.3 %
 - Right-wing 21.8%
 - Ethno-nationalists 6.9%
 - Left-wing 2%
- Right-wing attacks growing
- Link between electoral success of far-right political parties and far-right hate groups and terrorists?
- Hate crime same as terrorism?

CHALLENGES OF NEW WAVE OF RIGHT-WING TERRORISM

- “Leaderless Resistance” interacts with factors that create growing threat of right-wing terrorism
 - Few coordinated plots, but military experience, new technologies, better broadcasting of messages → more violence?
- Societal Factors
 - Anti-immigrant xenophobia
 - Acute political polarization
 - Conspiracy Theories abound
- Role of social media?

SOCIAL MEDIA

- How do terrorists use the internet/social media?
- Functions
 - Content hosting
 - Audience development
 - Brand control
 - Secure communications
 - Community maintenance
 - Financing
 - Information collection and curation
- Variations with different platforms

COUNTERTERRORISM AND SOCIAL MEDIA: QUESTIONS FOR TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES

- How to balance free speech, privacy, and security?
- How to determine who's a terrorist?
- Content standards?
- Removal orders?
- Finding terrorism content?
- What to do with terrorism content once found?

EUROPEAN UNION APPROACH: DIGITAL SERVICES ACT (DSA)

- Role of internet and social media: 2020 right-wing attacks: One in five some significant social media noted as related to attack
- Digital Services Act (2022, to be in force 2024)
 - Among other things, DSA intended to curb distribution of illegal, harmful content online
 - Must remove content that pose a “societal risk”
 - Fines for not removing content (accountability)
- Will DSA work? Limitations of approach?

EU VS. US IN APPROACHING ONLINE EXTREMIST CONTENT?

- Governing approach in US?
 - 1st Amendment
 - Section 230 of Communications Decency Act
- Will DSA impact content in US?
- Value of each approach?